

# Retiree News

A Supplement to the Desert Airman

Friday, April 30, 2004

## Notes to Know

### Society of Military Widows

Society members will meet May 15, June 19 and July 17 for lunch and a general meeting at The Mirage Officers' Club. Widows of all services whose husbands died on active duty or in retirement are invited to join the society. Call Luise Bell at 663-0279 for reservations one week before the meeting. The cost for lunch is \$13. Members of the clubs receive discounts on lunch. Those not wanting lunch may come after for the meeting and program. For more information on the SMW, call Suzanne Shafe at 579-0789.

### Retiree Supplement

Those who used to receive the Retiree News Supplement to the Desert Airman are asked to keep their address current with the Retiree Activities Office staff. They can be reached at 228-5100, [retired@dm.af.mil](mailto:retired@dm.af.mil) or 5345 East Madera Street.

Those unable to pick up a copy of the Desert Airman can access it online at [www.dm.af.mil/pa/news/retiree\\_news\\_archive.html](http://www.dm.af.mil/pa/news/retiree_news_archive.html). Using Adobe Acrobat, follow the instructions on the Web site to view up to two years of retiree news supplements.

### Used cell phones wanted

The Pima Council on Aging is collecting used and unwanted cell phones as a fund-raising opportunity to benefit the council. All kinds of phones are accepted. Older, analog phones are not as valuable to redeem as digital ones but the council will take as many phones as they can get. Take used cell phones to the PCOA office located at 8467 East Broadway behind the D-M Credit Union.

## Travel test program to continue

The one-year test to expand space-available travel privileges to family members of active-duty and retired service members traveling within the continental United States will continue until further notice. The test was scheduled to expire April 1.

The extension will allow privileges to continue while secretary of defense officials complete their evaluation of the test, according to Air Mobility

Command's air transportation division officials.

Family members are able to travel Space-A aboard military flights when accompanied by their sponsors, said John Lundebly of the passenger policy branch.

The test does not apply to Guard and Reserve Airmen who are retired but are not yet eligible for retired pay and benefits. Surviving spouses are

also unable to take advantage of this benefit.

Davis-Monthan Air Force Base has two flights monthly to California (Beale and Travis Air Force Bases). For more information, call 228-2322 or send an e-mail to [spacea@dm.af.mil](mailto:spacea@dm.af.mil). Additional Space-A travel and sign-up information is available through the passenger policy branch Web site at <http://public.amc.af.mil/SPACEA/spacea.htm>.

## D-M volunteers receive thanks

Thirty-seven Retiree Activities Office and four active duty volunteers worked to complete another successful Volunteer Income Tax Assistance year. Their efforts are recognized and appreciated. The volunteers, who worked in tax preparation, administration and various other coordinating functions, are as follows:

Bob Agney  
Dave Barclay  
Skip Barclay

Louise Bennett  
Hue Blair  
Jim Blaylock  
Helen Bouska  
Kirk Carpenter  
Arnella Corrigan  
Monte Crook  
Virginia Crook  
Armen Dermen  
Becky Dylla  
Barbara Evans  
Glen Geisert  
Bob Green  
Janet Green  
Ray Griffith  
Alma Haywood  
Guy Hummon  
Marcus Johnson  
Master Sgt. Bill Jones



Airman Christina Kinsey

Carole Kelly  
Bert King  
Staff Sgt. Sarah Lykins  
Neal MacArto  
Staff Sgt. Paul  
MacDonald  
Judy Moses  
Herb Niehaus  
Linda Paul  
Jack Pollin

Tom Rankin  
Bob Ratledge  
Molly Reilly  
Dick Rhodehamel  
Cheri Roy  
Capt. Tim Rushenberg  
Chuck Smith  
Bob Speer  
Mary Pat Sullivan  
Bill Wells

*Congratulations to Pauline Pennock who was selected as the Woman Volunteer for 2004 for the Southern Arizona Veteran Administration Health Care System April 15. Mrs. Pennock is also an active volunteer with the Retiree Activities Office and the Society of Military Widows.*

## Renovations at pharmacy now complete

The pharmacy renovation project at the 355th Medical Group clinic is complete and the pharmacy is back in its original location. Some changes, like five windows instead of three and a customer ticketing system, are evident. Other changes are not so visible such as automated software and barcode technology.

The pharmacy now serves customers based on a priority system. The first priority is active duty members in uniform, followed by patients seen by a clinic provider and then those with prescriptions

from off-base providers.

One important new policy is that customers must check in at the pharmacy before any medications are filled. Prescriptions will not be filled as soon as a clinic provider enters them into the system.

There are two ways to fill a prescription. The first is to stop at the desk and get a ticket, wait to be called to a window and then wait or leave to return later. The second method is to drop-off the

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# Advances increase life expectancy

During the last century the health and life expectancy of U.S. residents improved dramatically. The average lifespan has lengthened by greater than 30 years. While advances in diagnosis and treatment of disease have played a significant role in increasing life expectancy, most of the gain is attributable to advances in public health.

The top 10 advances in public health were highlighted recently by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

10. Fluoridation of drinking water started in 1945 and has played an important role in cavity reduction and tooth loss.

9. Eliminating lead in gasoline, paint and food containers has led to a big drop in the blood lead levels in Americans.

8. Family planning has altered social and economic roles of women, influenced smaller family size, promoted longer intervals between children and fewer infant, child and maternal deaths.

7. Since 1900, infant mortality has decreased 90 percent and maternal mortality has decreased 99 percent resulting in healthier mothers and babies.

6. There have been decreases in microbial contamination and increases in nutritional content of food creating safer, healthier foods.

5. Since 1964, the prevalence of smoking among adults has decreased since tobacco was identified as a health hazard.

4. The control of infectious diseases has resulted from cleaner water and an overall

improved sanitation.

3. Severe injuries and deaths related to mining, manufacturing, construction and transportation have decreased, creating safer workplaces.

2. Engineering efforts to make vehicles and highways safer, and efforts to change personal behavior such as the increased use of seat belts and helmets, and promoting not drinking while driving have contributed to large reductions in motor vehicle related deaths.

1. Vaccines have been developed or licensed against 21 diseases, 11 of which are recommended for all U.S. children. Smallpox has been eradicated, polio is nearly eradicated worldwide and rates for nine vaccine-preventable diseases and their complications are much lower.

*(Information courtesy Arizona Department of Health Services' Prevention Bulletin.)*

## RAO needs volunteers

The Retiree Activities Office needs people willing to volunteer at least four hours a week. If the RAO doesn't have placements of interest to a volunteer, they will pass a referral to other agencies such as family services, the medical clinic or the Veterans Administration; all of whom appreciate willing volunteers. Contact the RAO at 228-5100, [retired@dm.af.mil](mailto:retired@dm.af.mil) or 5345 East Madera Street.

## Pharmacy

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prescription at the desk and return to window five after 11 a.m. the next day. No ticket is needed for this method.

Patients are reminded the pharmacy now only fills new

prescriptions and the satellite pharmacy takes care of all refill prescriptions.

The main pharmacy is open Mondays through Fridays from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the satellite pharmacy is open Mondays through Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The satellite pharmacy refill line is 228-5007. For more information, call 228-1552.

## Retirees slow to use online system

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service's online pay account information system, myPay, has been in existence for four years. Although successful, it is still underutilized by retirees and surviving spouses.

Officials at DFAS point out that as of March 1, only 20.4 percent of retirees with customized personal identification numbers and 4 percent of annuitants have tried myPay.

Customers can view, print and save their earnings statements, make adjustments to federal and state tax withholdings and update bank account and electronic transfers by accessing myPay at <https://mypay.dfas.mil>.

Retired and annuitant pay recipients who have not yet discovered the benefits of myPay may get more details and request a pin number by visiting <http://www.dfas.mil>.

## Retiree almanac

This almanac is designed to keep retirees up-to-date on topics of interest. It contains detailed information on recent legislation, military health care, veteran's benefits, space available lodging, travel and much more. Cost is \$12. To order, send a check or money order to Uniformed Services Almanac, Inc., P.O. Box 4144-AB, Falls Church, Va., 22044. To order by credit card, call 1-888-872-9698 or visit <http://www.militaryalmanac.com>. When ordering, specify the Retired Military Almanac because the company publishes several almanacs.

## Spending time with friends improves health

Eating right, exercising, taking supplements and meditating daily are not the only things that can protect one's health. Spending time with friends also works.

In Seattle, a yearlong study found that people without strong social connections had more health problems and made more doctors' office and hospital visits. A nine-year study of 7,000 California adults, ages 38 to 94, found that the risk of pre-mature death doubles

or triples in someone who lacks friends. In addition, having many kinds of social relationships - connections to family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, team member, parishioners, etc - may help fight off disease. Researchers at Carnegie Mellon University found that among participants who were infected with a cold virus, those with three or fewer types of social ties were four times more likely to develop cold symptoms

than those with at least six different types of relationships.

So, what is it about friends? They provide emotional support, buffer stress and encourage you to engage in healthy behaviors, explains Dr. Redford Williams, director of the Behavioral Medicine research Center at Duke University Medical Center and one of the leading researchers in the field of social ties and wellness.

"People who have social support

have lower blood pressure and produce few stress hormones," Dr. Williams said. "That's probably why their immune systems work better."

Even so, a sorority is not needed to reap the health benefits of friendship. In fact, for women, having too many friends could be a source of stress.

"Women feel more responsibility to help their friends than men do," said Dr. Williams.

*(Information courtesy March Pima Council on Aging newsletter, Never Too Late.)*